

*Melancon Requested Corps Extend Comment Period an Additional 14 Days to Address Jesuit Bend Concerns*

May 19, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. -U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (LA-03) commended the Army Corps of Engineers for extending the comment period for the proposed federal hurricane protection project in Plaquemines Parish to address concerns from some members of the community. In accordance with a request made by Congressman Melancon on May 14th, the Corps announced late yesterday afternoon that they will extend the comment period for the Westbank and Vicinity/Eastern Tie In project. Rep. Melancon's letter is attached.

**"The citizens of Plaquemines Parish have waited too long for hurricane protection, and too much is at stake to delay progress for another season,"** said Rep. Melancon. **"However, I have heard many concerns from people in the affected communities about the current plans. This extension to the comment period will enable us to get everyone in the same room and work through some of the sticking points. We need to do this right the first time and find a solution that will provide the highest level of protection to the greatest number of people possible, without causing further delays and obstacles."**

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Rep. Melancon worked with members of the Louisiana delegation to strengthen or replace the existing nonfederal levees in south Plaquemines Parish and incorporate them into the Army Corps' federal New Orleans to Venice Hurricane Protection Project. When complete, communities as far south as Venice at the southern end of Plaquemines Parish will have up to three times the level of hurricane protection as they had before the 2005 storms.

Since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Rep. Melancon and the Louisiana delegation have worked to secure a total of \$671 million in federal funds to strengthen hurricane protection in south Plaquemines Parish.

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